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Clearman et al.

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(54) **CAMERA HOUSING**

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CPC G03B 17/08-10; E05C 19/10
See application file for complete search history.

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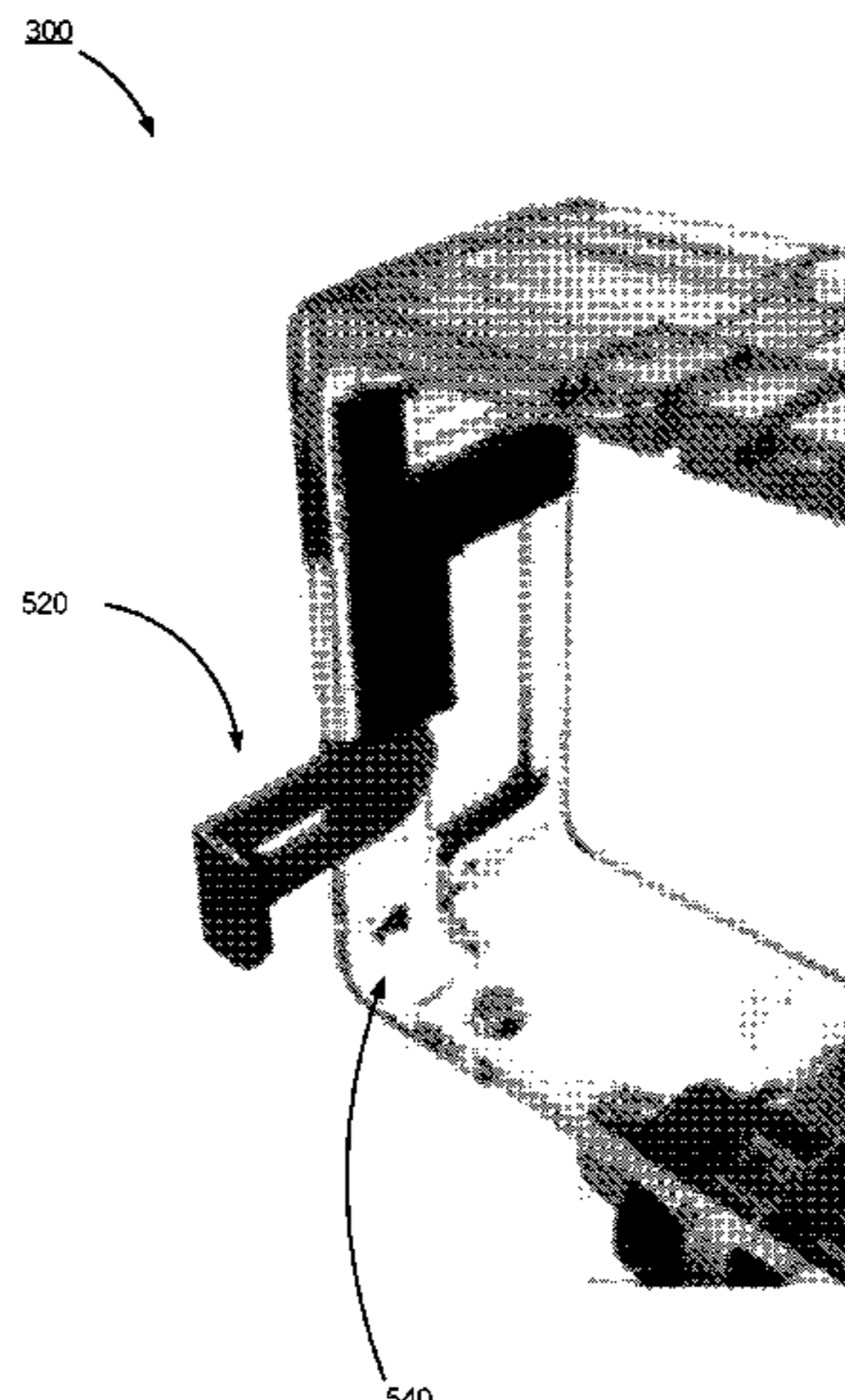
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(57) **ABSTRACT**

A camera housing having a first housing portion that forms a first portion of a cavity to receive a camera and a second housing portion. The second housing portion that forms a second portion of the cavity to receive the camera. A hinge movably connecting the first housing portion to the second housing portion so that the second housing portion is movable relative to the first housing portion to expose the cavity. Fastening structures configured to connect the first housing portion to the second housing portion when the camera housing is in a closed position, wherein one of the fastening structures include a first latch component and a second latch component. The first latch component connected to the first housing portion. The second latch component configured to connect to the second housing portion at a first end and the first latch component at a second end and the first latch component is configured to position the second latch component over the second housing portion so that the second latch component couples the first housing portion and the second housing portion together. Protrusions extending from

(Continued)



the first housing portion and configured to connect the camera housing to a mount.

20 Claims, 13 Drawing Sheets

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continuation of application No. 16/515,342, filed on Jul. 18, 2019, now Pat. No. 10,754,229, which is a continuation of application No. 15/937,004, filed on Mar. 27, 2018, now Pat. No. 10,511,750, which is a continuation of application No. 15/487,534, filed on Apr. 14, 2017, now Pat. No. 9,930,231, which is a continuation of application No. 14/995,599, filed on Jan. 14, 2016, now Pat. No. 9,628,681, which is a continuation of application No. 14/459,650, filed on Aug. 14, 2014, now Pat. No. 9,268,200, which is a continuation of application No. 13/949,160, filed on Jul. 23, 2013, now Pat. No. 8,837,928.

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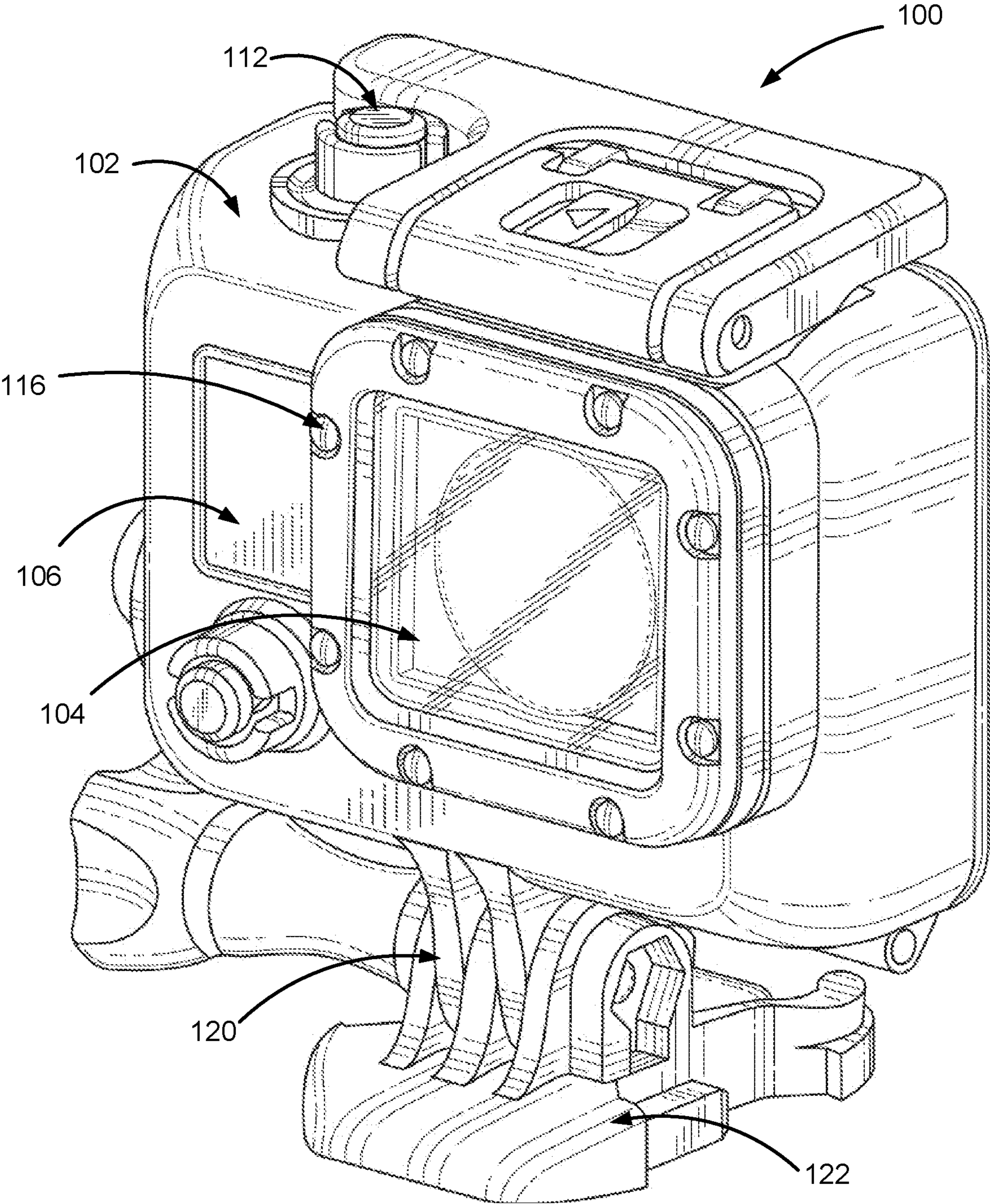


FIG. 1A

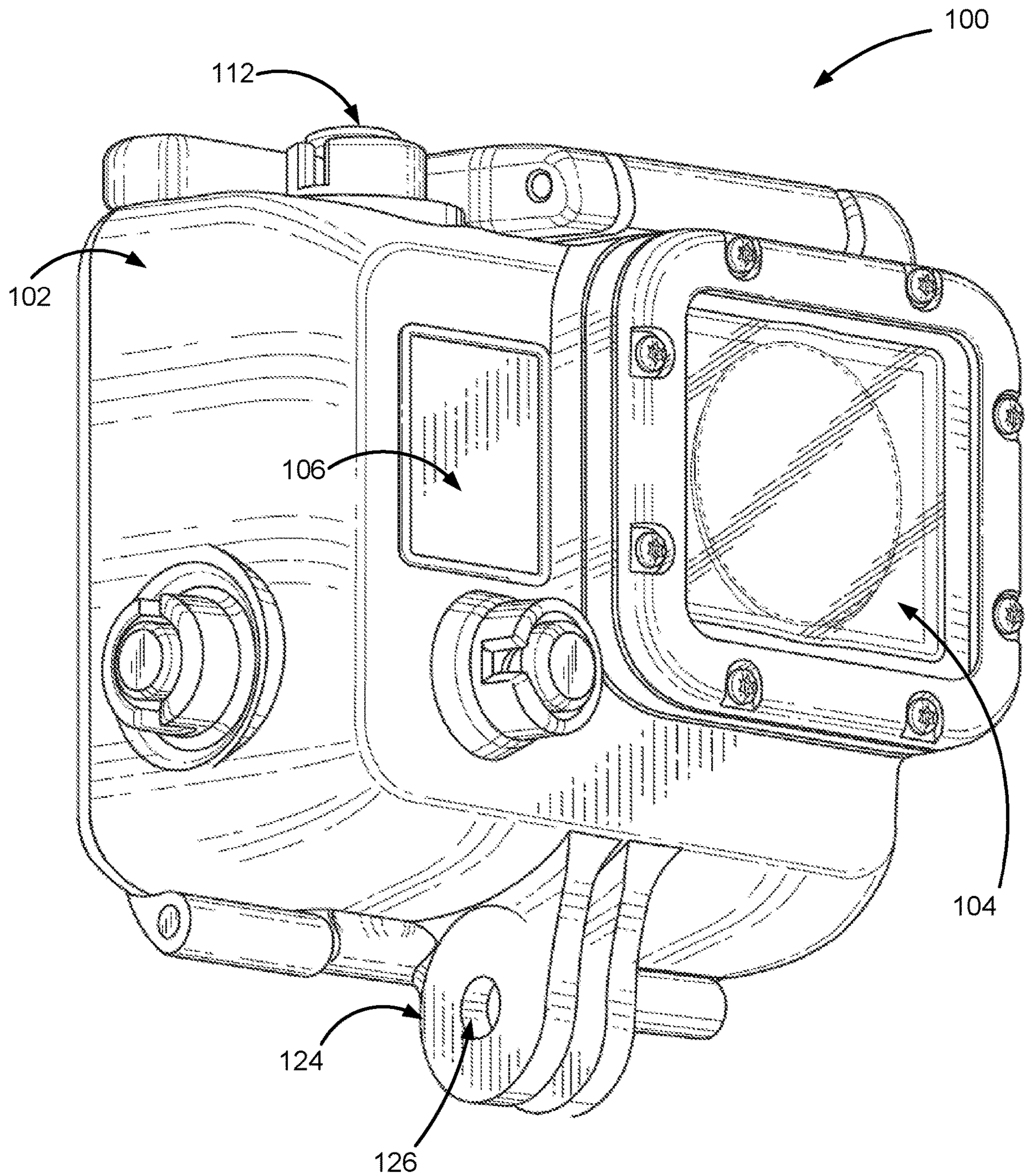


FIG. 1B

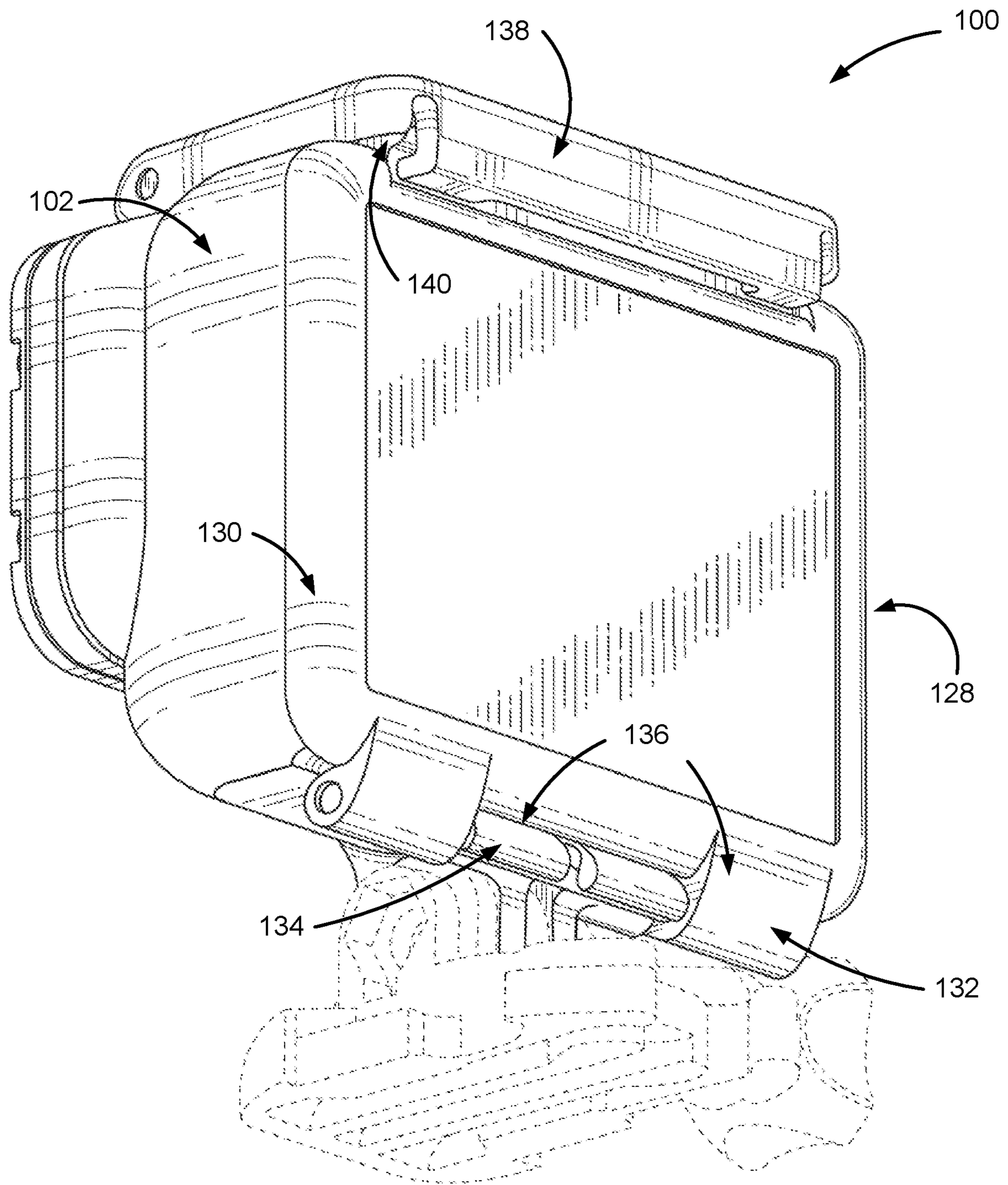


FIG. 1C

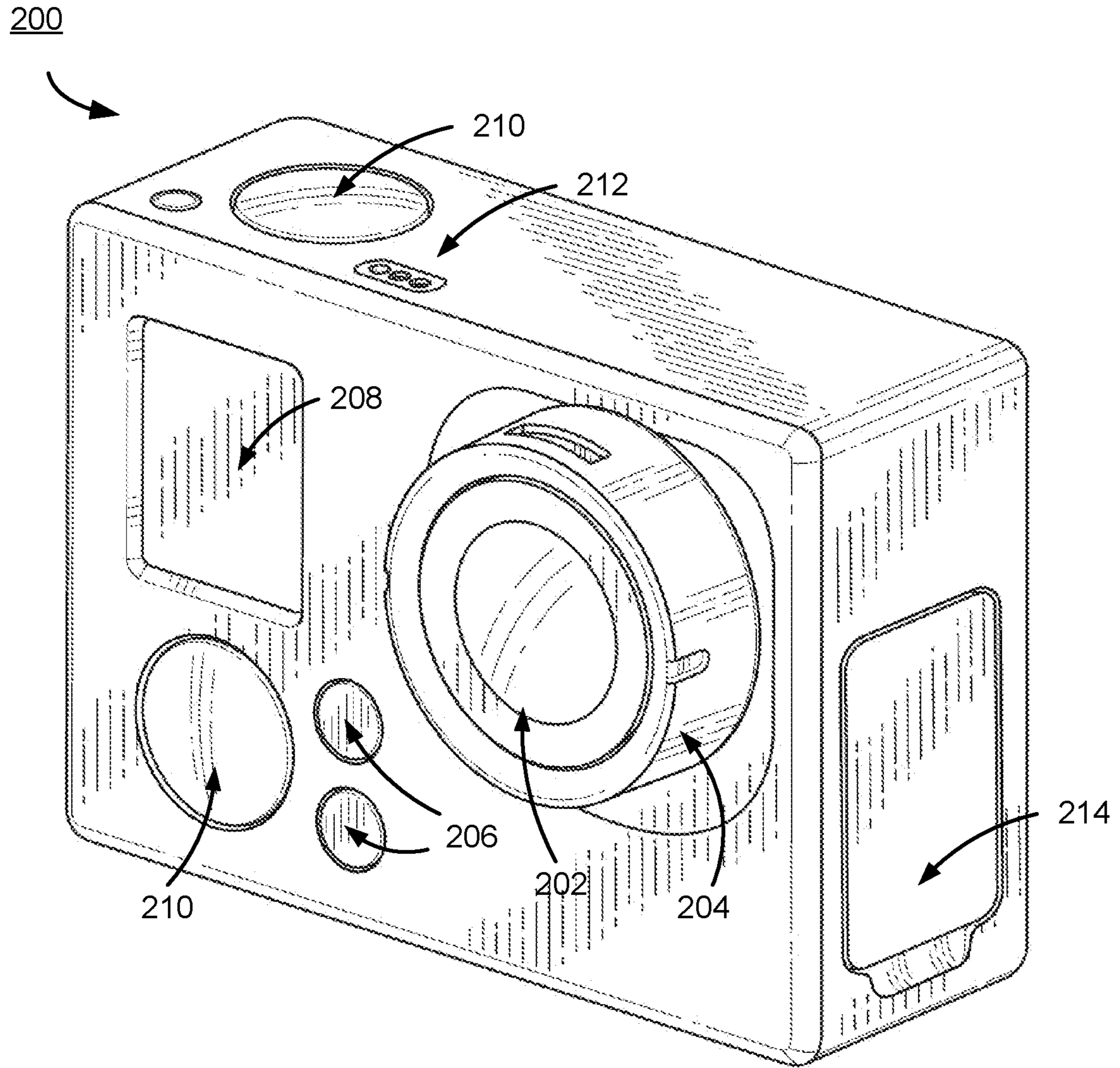


FIG. 2a

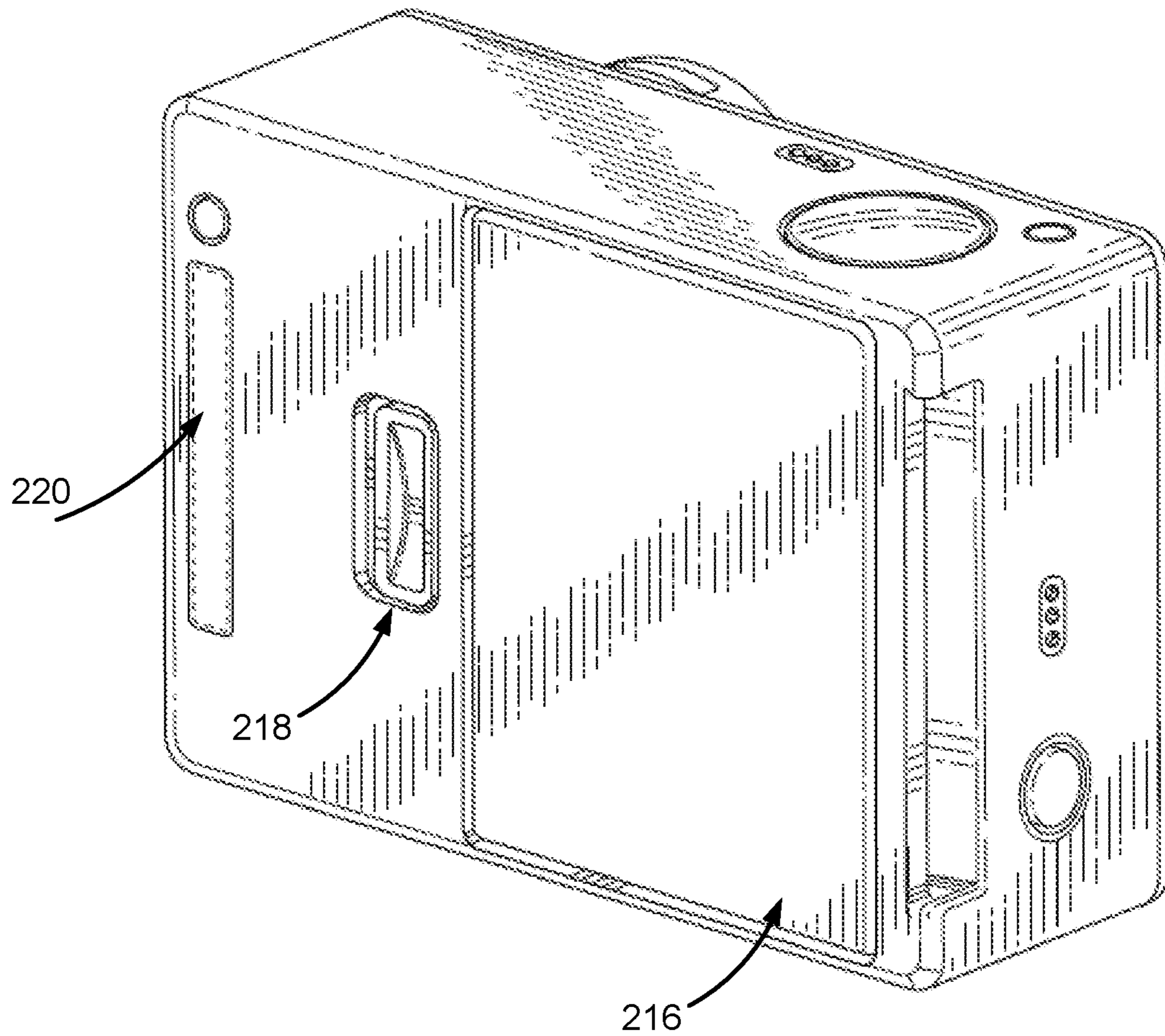


FIG. 2b

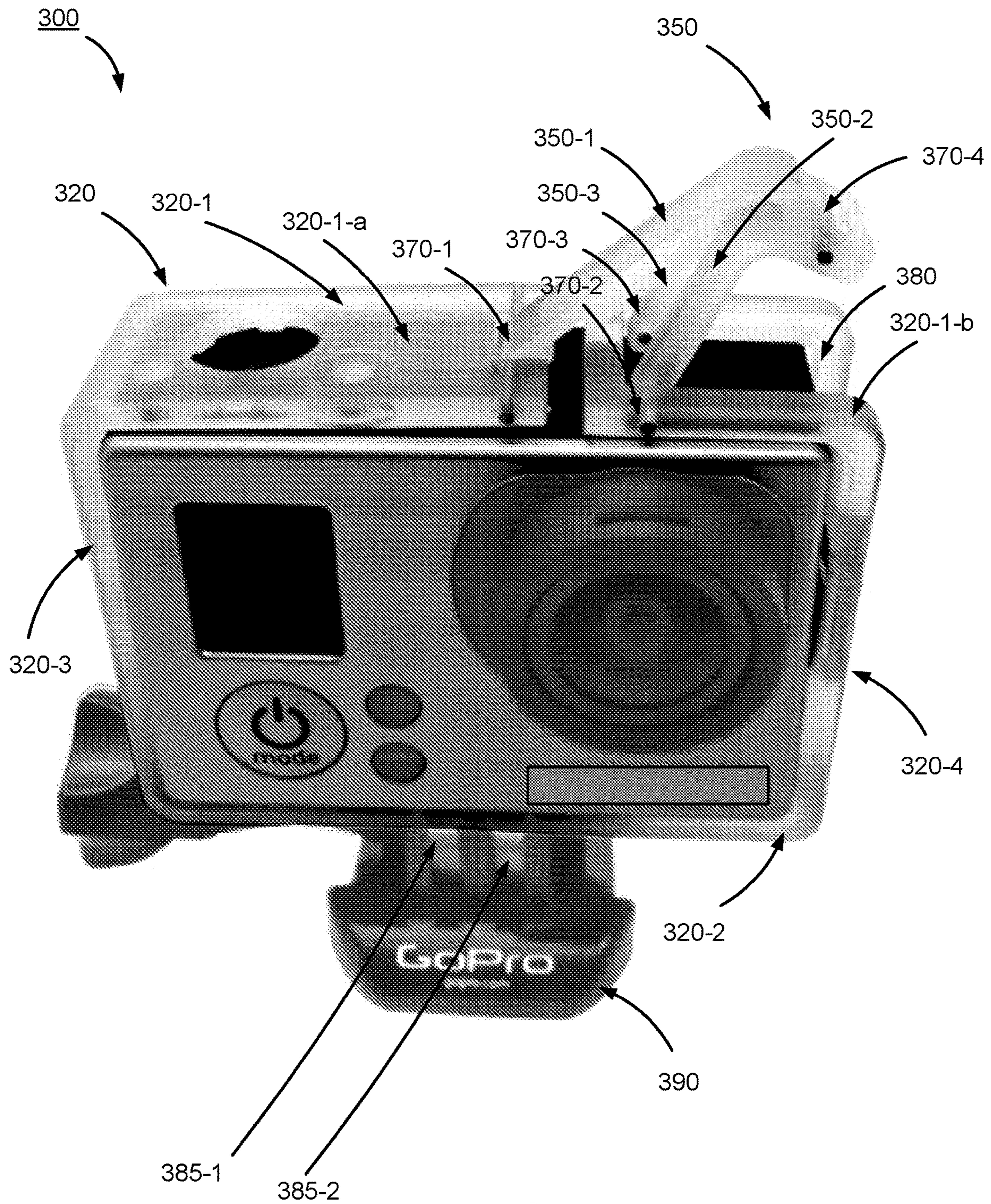


FIG. 3a

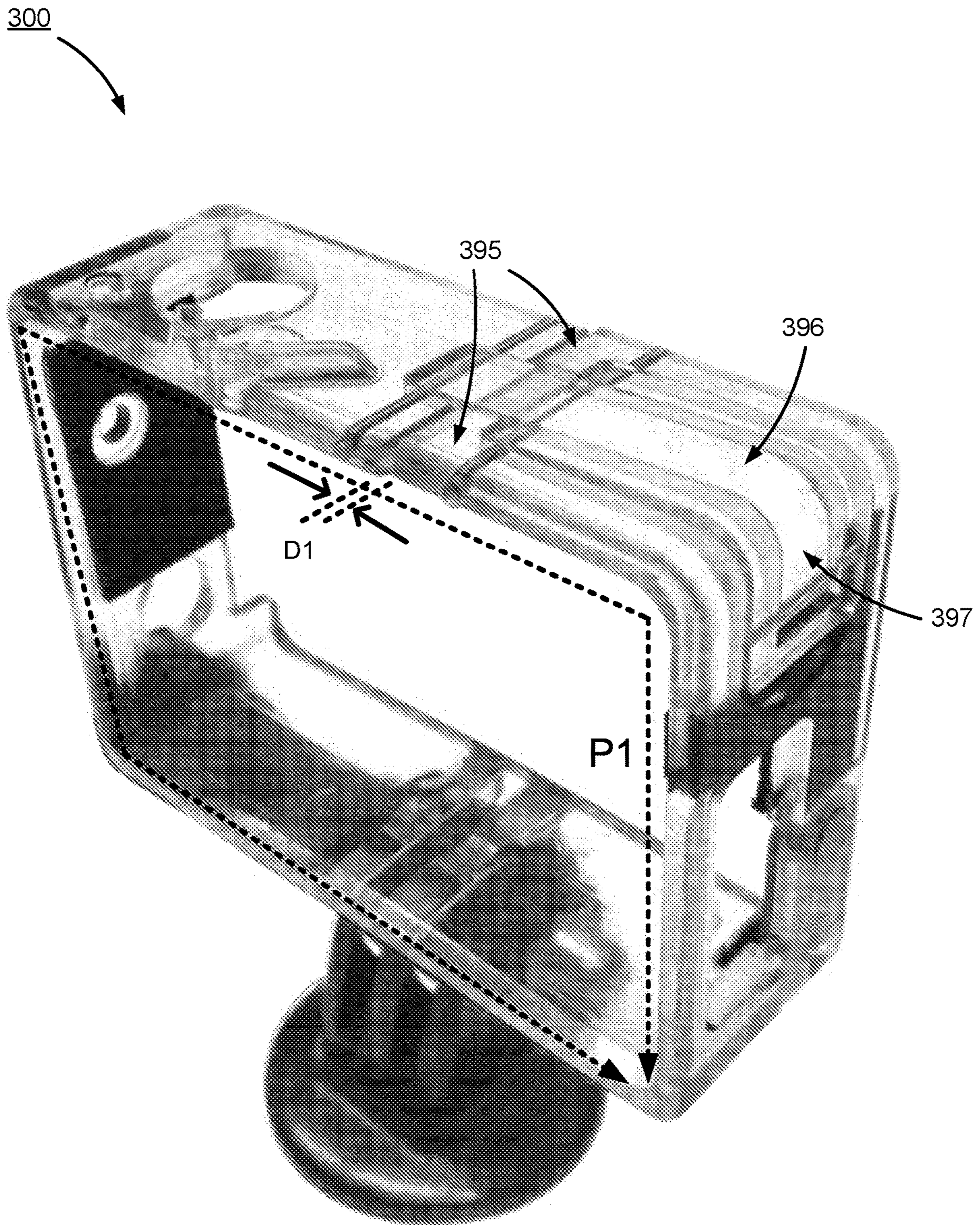


FIG. 3b

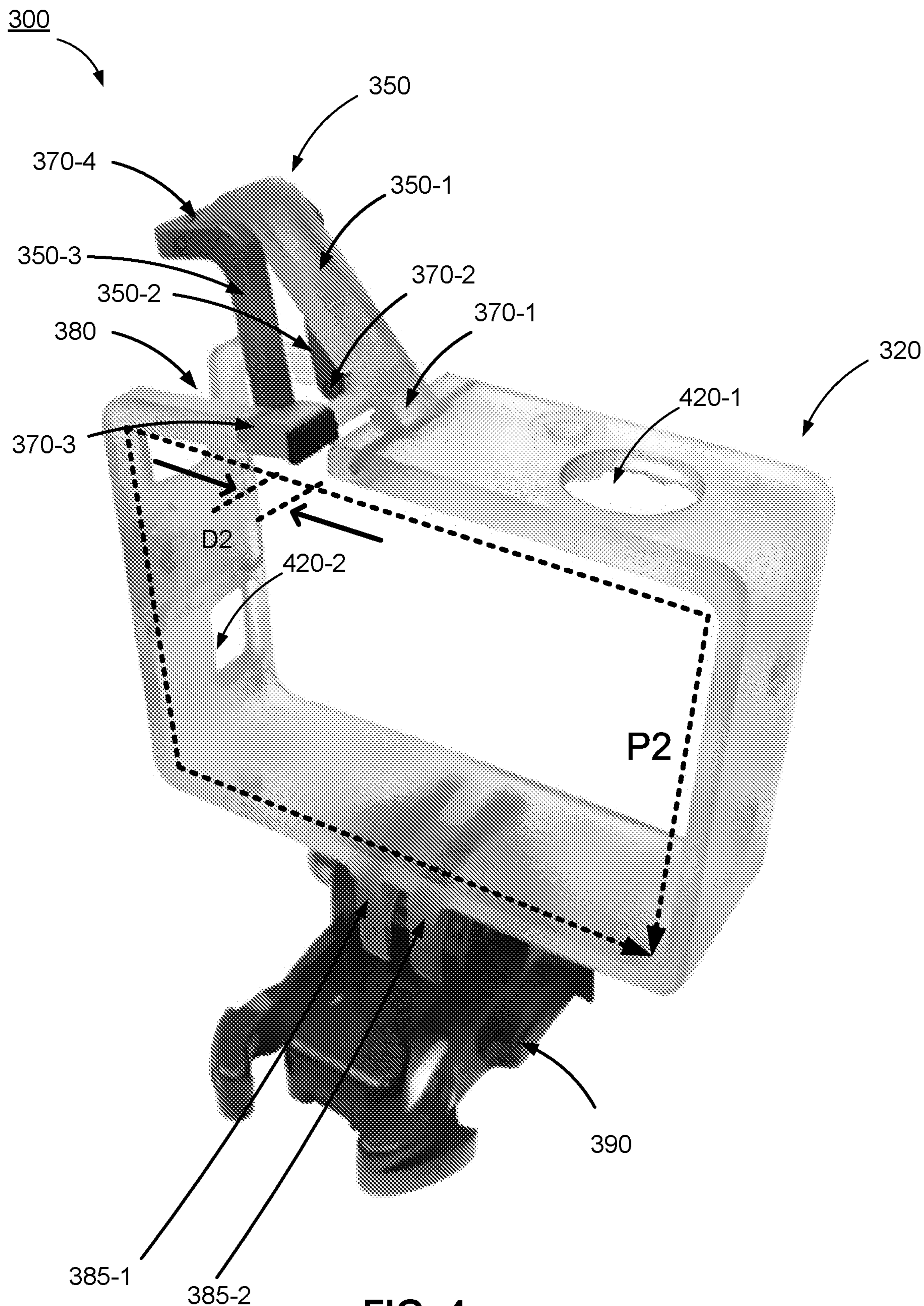


FIG. 4a

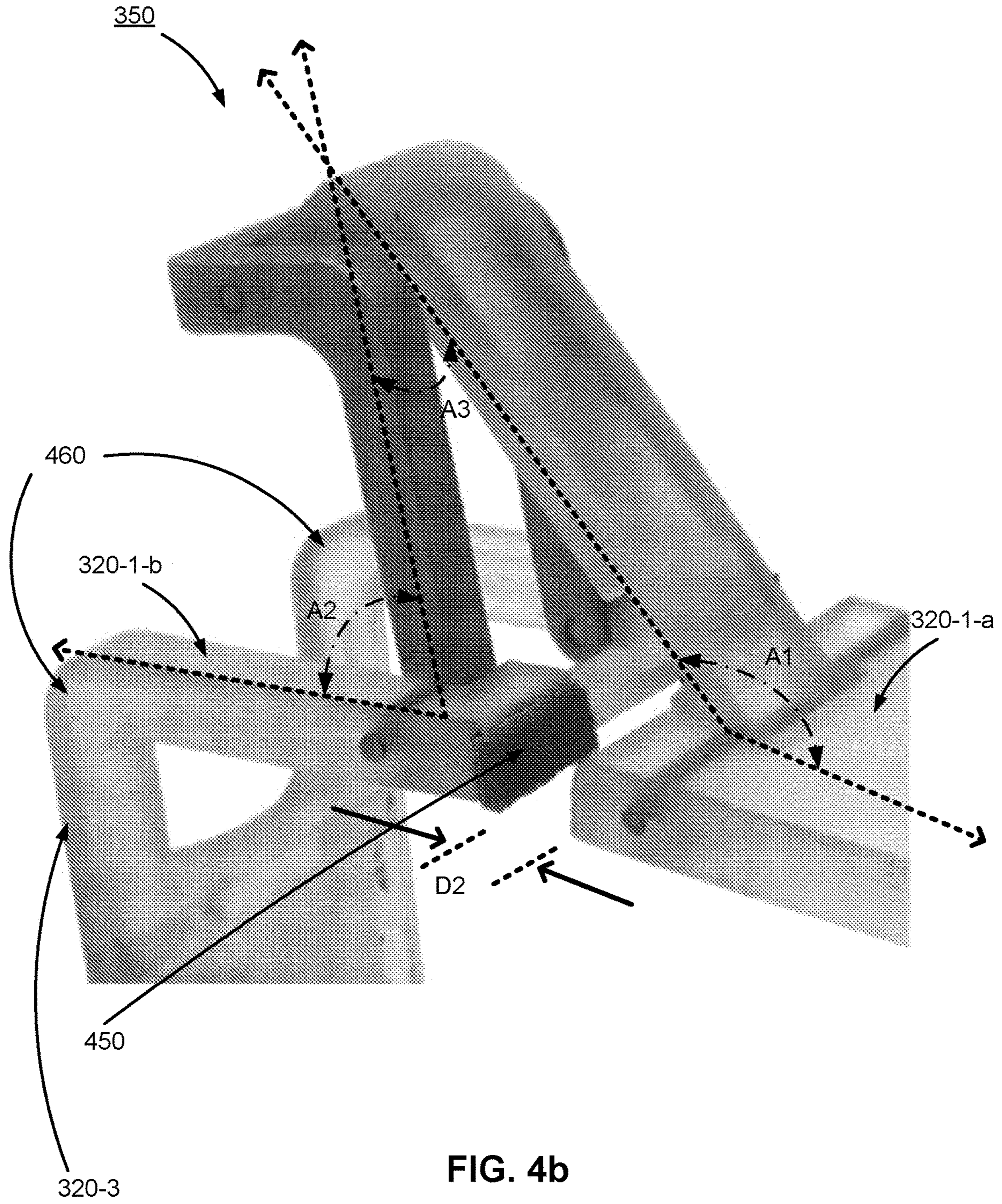


FIG. 4b

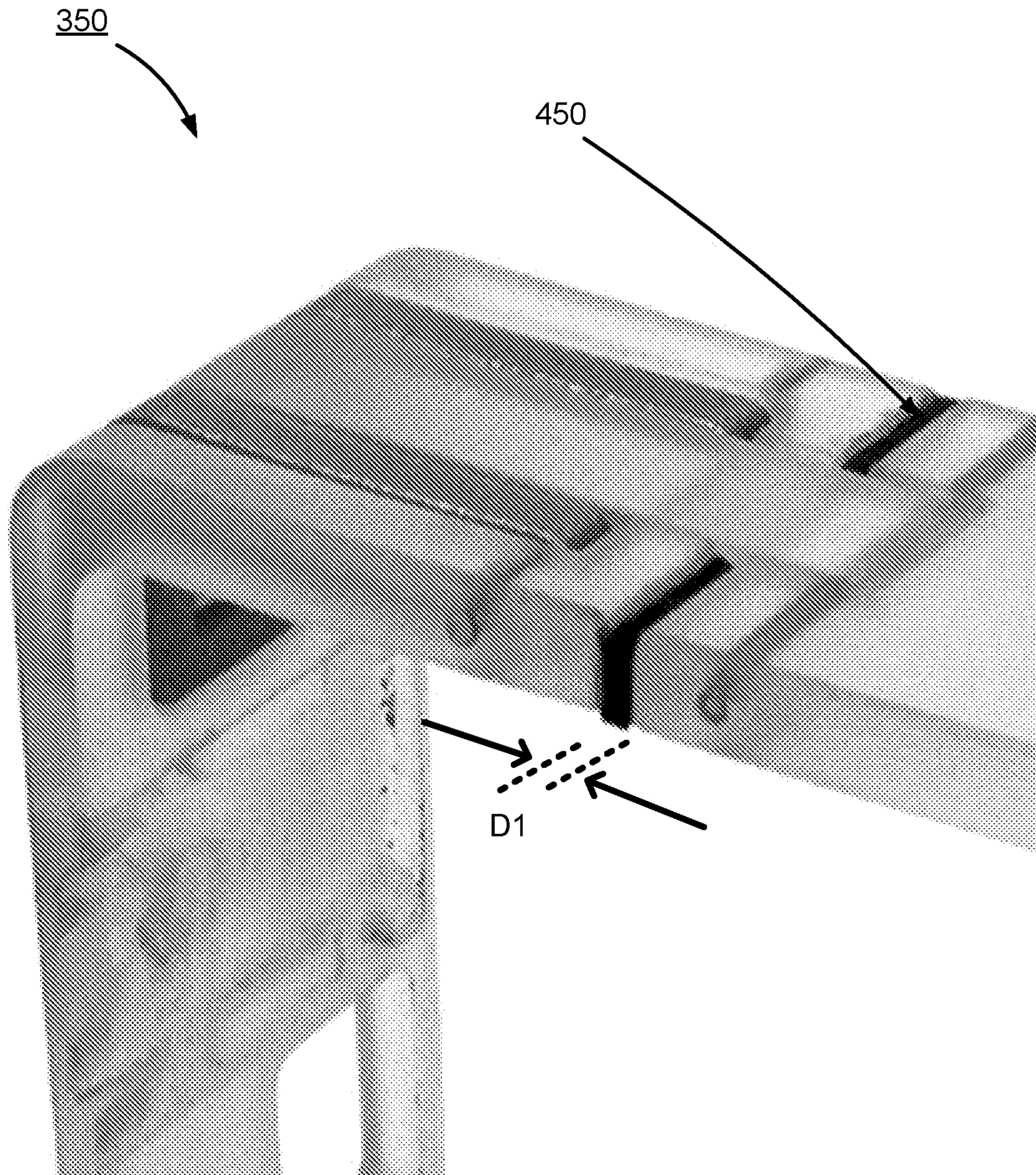


FIG. 4c

300




FIG. 5a

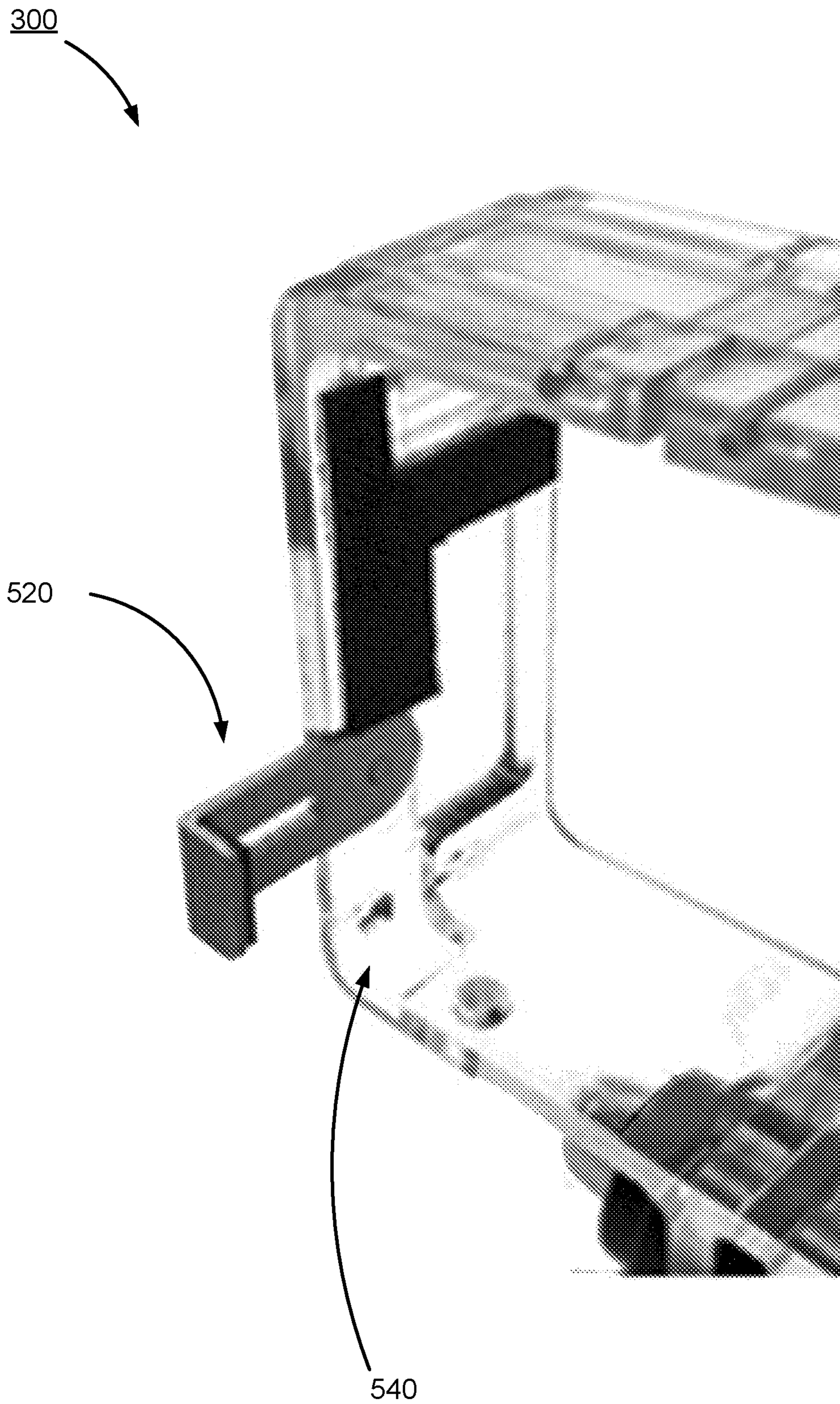


FIG. 5b

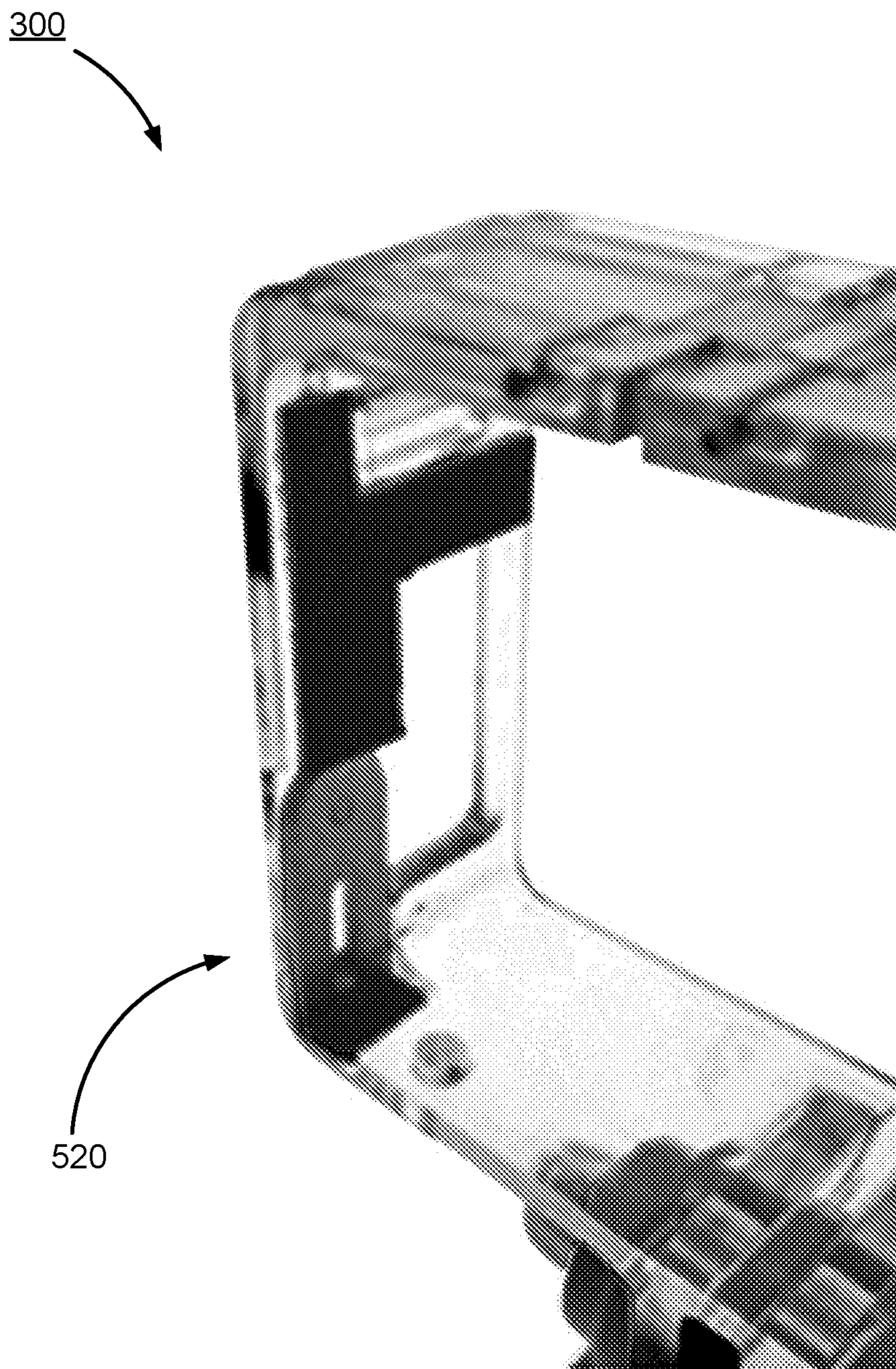


FIG. 5c

CAMERA HOUSING

CROSS REFERENCE TO RELATED
APPLICATIONS

This application is a continuation of U.S. patent application Ser. No. 16/935,873, filed Jul. 22, 2020, which is a continuation of U.S. patent application Ser. No. 16/515,342, filed Jul. 18, 2019, now U.S. Pat. No. 10,754,229, which is a continuation of U.S. application Ser. No. 15/937,004, filed Mar. 27, 2018, now U.S. Pat. No. 10,511,750, which application is a continuation of U.S. application Ser. No. 15/487,534, filed Apr. 14, 2017, now U.S. Pat. No. 9,930,231, which application is a continuation of U.S. application Ser. No. 14/995,599, filed Jan. 14, 2016, now U.S. Pat. No. 9,628,681, which application is a continuation of U.S. application Ser. No. 14/459,650, filed Aug. 14, 2014, now U.S. Pat. No. 9,268,200, which application is a continuation of U.S. application Ser. No. 13/949,160, filed Jul. 23, 2013, now U.S. Pat. No. 8,837,928, all of which are incorporated by reference in their entireties.

BACKGROUND

Technical Field

This disclosure relates to a camera system, and more specifically, to a housing for a camera.

Description of the Related Art

Digital cameras are increasingly used in outdoors and sports environments. In order to allow for the safe use of cameras in such environments, the cameras need to be secured to camera mounts, which in turn can be secured to, for example, sports equipment, vehicles, or a user. One such means for securing a camera to a camera mount is a camera housing that securely encloses or partially encloses a camera. A camera housing can include means for coupling to a camera mount, allowing a user to mount a secured camera during use of the camera. A user's experience with a camera housing can be diminished by difficult or complicated mechanisms for securing a camera within or removing a camera from the camera housing. In addition, the user's experience can be further complicated if the camera housing must be decoupled from the camera mount before a camera can be secured within or removed from the camera housing.

BRIEF DESCRIPTIONS OF THE DRAWINGS

The disclosed embodiments have other advantages and features which will be more readily apparent from the following detailed description of the invention and the appended claims, when taken in conjunction with the accompanying drawings, in which:

FIG. 1a illustrates a perspective view of a camera system, according to one embodiment.

FIG. 1b illustrates another alternative perspective view of a camera system, according to one embodiment.

FIG. 1c illustrates a perspective view of a rear of the camera system, according to one embodiment.

FIG. 2a illustrates a perspective view of a camera for use with the camera system, according to one embodiment.

FIG. 2b illustrates a perspective view of a rear of a camera for use with the camera system, according to one embodiment.

FIG. 3a illustrates a perspective view of a camera housing configured to enclose a camera, according to some embodiments.

FIG. 3b illustrates a perspective view of a camera housing with a securing latch mechanism, according to some embodiments.

FIG. 4a illustrates a perspective view of a camera housing with a latch mechanism, according to some embodiments.

FIG. 4b illustrates a close-up perspective view of a latch mechanism in an open position, according to some embodiments.

FIG. 4c illustrates a close-up perspective view of a latch mechanism in a closed position, according to some embodiments.

FIGS. 5a-5c illustrate perspective views of a camera housing with a foldable handle mechanism configured to serve as a securing arm, according to some embodiments.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

The figures and the following description relate to preferred embodiments by way of illustration only. It should be noted that from the following discussion, alternative embodiments of the structures and methods disclosed herein will be readily recognized as viable alternatives that may be employed without departing from the principles of what is claimed.

Reference will now be made in detail to several embodiments, examples of which are illustrated in the accompanying figures. It is noted that wherever practicable similar or like reference numbers may be used in the figures and may indicate similar or like functionality. The figures depict embodiments of the disclosed system (or method) for purposes of illustration only. One skilled in the art will readily recognize from the following description that alternative embodiments of the structures and methods illustrated herein may be employed without departing from the principles described herein.

Example Camera System Configuration

A camera system includes a camera and a camera housing structured to at least partially enclose the camera. The camera includes a camera body having a camera lens structured on a front surface of the camera body, various indicators on the front of the surface of the camera body (such as LEDs, displays, and the like), various input mechanisms (such as buttons, switches, and touch-screen mechanisms), and electronics (e.g., imaging electronics, power electronics, etc.) internal to the camera body for capturing images via the camera lens and/or performing other functions. The camera housing can include a lens window structured on the front surface of the camera housing and configured to substantially align with the camera lens, and can include one or more indicator windows structured on the front surface of the camera housing and configured to substantially align with the camera indicators.

FIGS. 1a and 1b illustrate various views of a camera system according to one example embodiment. The camera system includes, among other components, a camera housing 100. In one embodiment, a first housing portion 102 includes a front face with four sides (i.e., a top side, bottom side, left side, and right side) structured to form a cavity that receives a camera (e.g. a still camera or video camera). In other embodiments, the camera housing 100 may not include one or more sides or faces. For instance, the camera housing 100 may not include a front or back face, allowing

the front face and rear face of the camera to be exposed when partially enclosed by the top side, bottom side, left side, and right side of the camera housing **100**.

In one embodiment, the camera housing **100** has a small form factor (e.g., a height of approximately 2 to 7 centimeters, a width of approximately 2 to 7 centimeters, and a depth of approximately 1 to 5 centimeters), and is lightweight (e.g., approximately 50 to 150 grams). The camera housing **100** can be rigid (or substantially rigid) (e.g., plastic, metal, fiberglass, etc.) or pliable (or substantially pliable) (e.g., leather, vinyl, neoprene, etc.). In one embodiment, the camera housing **100** may be appropriately configured for use in various elements. For example, the camera housing **100** may include a waterproof enclosure that protects a camera from water when used, for example, while surfing or scuba diving.

Portions of the camera housing **100** may include exposed areas to allow a user to manipulate buttons on the camera that are associated with the camera functionality. Alternatively, such areas may be covered with a pliable material to allow the user to manipulate the buttons through the camera housing **100**. For example, in one embodiment the top face of the camera housing **100** includes an outer shutter button **112** structured so that a shutter button **112** of the camera is substantially aligned with the outer shutter button **112** when the camera is secured within the camera housing **100**. The shutter button **112** of the camera is operationally coupled to the outer shutter button **112** so that pressing the outer shutter button **112** allows the user to operate the camera shutter button.

The front face of the camera housing **100** can include a lens window **104** structured so that a lens of the camera is substantially aligned with the lens windows **104** when the camera is secured within the camera housing **100**. The lens window **104** can be adapted for use with a conventional lens, a wide angle lens, a flat lens, or any other specialized camera lens. In this embodiment, the lens window **104** includes a waterproof seal so as to maintain the waterproof aspect of the housing **100**.

In one embodiment, the camera housing **100** includes one or more securing structures **120** for securing the camera housing **100** to one of a variety of mounting devices. For example, FIG. **1a** illustrates the camera housing secured to a clip-style mount **122**. In this example, the camera housing **100** includes a first plurality of protrusions (protrusions **124** as shown in FIG. **1b**), and the mount **122** includes a second plurality of protrusions. Each protrusion includes a hole (hole **126** as shown in FIG. **1b**) at a similar location within the protrusion such that the first and second pluralities of protrusions can interlock in such a way that the protrusion holes substantially align. Continuing with this example, a turnable handscrew is inserted through the aligned holes, coupling the camera housing **100** to the mount **122** such that the camera housing can pivotally rotate relative to the mount when the turnable handscrew is in a first unlocked position, and such that the camera housing is fixed in position relative to the mount when the turnable handscrew is in a second locked position. In other embodiments, the camera housing **100** can be secured to a different type of mounting structure, and can be secured to a mounting structure via a different type of coupling mechanism.

After securing the housing to the camera mount, the camera mount can in turn be optionally secured to a user's backpack, sports equipment, or body. This allows a user to use the camera for photography (e.g., in a hands-free configuration or manner) without having to physically hold, safeguard, or otherwise physically handle the camera.

In one embodiment, the camera housing **100** includes an indicator window **106** structured so that one or more camera indicators are substantially aligned with the indicator window **106** when the camera is secured within the camera housing **100**. The indicator window **106** can be any shape or size, and can be made of the same material as the remainder of the camera housing **100**, or can be made of any other material, for instance a transparent or translucent material and/or a non-reflective material.

The described housing **100** may also be adapted for a wider range of devices of varying shapes, sizes and dimensions besides cameras. For example, an expansion module may be attached to housing **100** to add expanded features to electronic devices such as cell phones, music players, personal digital assistants ("PDAs"), global positioning system ("GPS") units, or other portable electronic devices.

FIG. **1c** is a rear perspective view of camera housing **100** illustrating a second housing portion **128**, according to one example embodiment. The second housing portion **128** detachably couples with the first housing portion **102** opposite the front face of the first housing portion. The first housing portion **102** and second housing portion **128** are collectively structured to enclose a camera within the cavity when the second housing portion **128** is secured to the first housing portion **102** in a closed position.

The second housing portion **128** can include a door **130** that allows the camera to be removed from the housing **100**. The door **130** pivots around a hinge **136** that allows the door **130** to be opened or shut. In one embodiment, a first fastening structure **138** located on the top face of the camera housing **100** detachably couples to a second fastening structure **140** on the door **130**. The fastening structures **138**, **140** secure the door **130** to the first portion **102** of the camera housing **100** in a closed position when coupled, as illustrated in FIG. **2**. In one embodiment, the fastening structure **138** includes a hook-shaped lateral bar and the fastening structure **140** comprises an L-shaped bar. The fastening structure **138** can pivot upwards to allow the door **130** to close and can then be pressed down around the fastening structure **140** to hold the door **130** in the closed position. In different embodiments, fastening structures for securing the door **130** can include, for example, a button assembly, a buckle assembly, a clip assembly, a hook and loop assembly, a magnet assembly, a ball and catch assembly, and an adhesive assembly, or any other type of securing mechanism.

In one alternative embodiment, the hinge **136** is instead located on the top face of the housing **100** and the fastening structures **138**, **140** are instead located on the bottom face of the housing **100**. Alternatively, the hinge **136** and fastening structures **138**, **140** may be located on opposite side faces of the camera housing **100**.

In one embodiment, the housing **100** includes a watertight seal so that the housing **100** is waterproof when the door **130** is shut. For example, in one embodiment, the door **130** includes a sealing structure positioned on interior edges of the door **130**. The sealing structure provides a watertight seal between the first portion of the camera housing **102** and the door **130** when the first securing structure **138** on the top face of the camera housing **100** is coupled to the second securing structure **140** on the top edge of the door **130**.

In one embodiment, an outer hinge structure **132** on the bottom edge of the second housing portion **128** detachably couples to an inner hinge structure **134** on the bottom edge of the first housing portion **102** to form the hinge **136**. For example, in one embodiment, the outer hinge structure **132** includes one or more hook-shaped protrusions structured to securely fasten to a rod-shaped member of the inner hinge

structure 134. Other mechanisms for coupling the second housing portion 128 to the housing 100 may also be used in various alternative embodiments. In other embodiments, the second housing portion 128 may be permanently attached to the first housing portion 102.

FIG. 2a illustrates a camera 200 for use with the camera systems described herein, according to one example embodiment. The camera 200 is configured to capture images and video, and to store captured images and video for subsequent display or playback. The camera 200 is adapted to fit within a camera housing, such as the housing 100 discussed above or any other housing described herein. As illustrated, the camera 200 includes a lens 202 configured to receive light incident upon the lens and to direct received light onto an image sensor internal to the lens. The lens 202 is enclosed by a lens ring 204.

The camera 200 can include various indicators, including the LED lights 206 and the LED display 208 shown in FIG. 2a. When the camera 200 is enclosed within the housing 100, the LED display 208 is configured to substantially align with the indicator window 106, and the LED lights 206 are configured to be visible through the housing 100. The camera 200 can also include buttons 210 configured to allow a user of the camera to interact with the camera, to turn the camera on, and to otherwise configure the operating mode of the camera. The camera 200 can also include a microphone 212 configured to receive and record audio signals in conjunction with recording video. The side of the camera 200 includes an I/O interface 214. Though the embodiment of FIG. 2a illustrates the I/O interface 214 enclosed by a protective door, the I/O interface can include any type or number of I/O ports or mechanisms, such as USC ports, HDMI ports, memory card slots, and the like.

FIG. 2b illustrates a perspective view of a rear of a camera 200 for use with the camera system, according to one embodiment. The camera 200 includes a door 216 that covers a removable battery and battery interface. The door 216 can be removed via the door release mechanism 218. The camera also includes an expansion pack interface 220 configured to receive a removable expansion pack, such as a display module, an extra battery module, a wireless module, and the like. Removable expansion packs, when coupled to the camera 200, provide additional functionality to the camera via the expansion pack interface 220.

Example Camera Housing

FIG. 3a illustrates a perspective view of camera housing 300 configured to enclose a camera, according to some embodiments. As shown in FIG. 3a, the camera housing 300 includes a four-sided frame 320 that is configured to enclose a camera. The camera housing of FIG. 3a securely encloses the camera along the lateral sides of the camera (the top, bottom, left, and right sides) without obscuring the front and rear faces of the camera. The camera housing 300 beneficially does not obstruct the camera lens, any LCD or other displays (front or rear), any optical indicators or buttons, and other user interface elements. To provide additional security to the camera when enclosed by the housing, the camera sides are optionally covered with a layer of material (such as rubber) to provide frictional grip between the camera sides and the inner perimeter of the camera housing in an enclosed position.

As illustrated in FIG. 3a, the camera housing 300 includes the four-sided frame 320, which includes a top side 320-1 (including segment 320-1-a and 320-1-b), a bottom side 320-2, a left side 320-3, and a right side 320-4. In one

embodiment, the four-sided frame 320 is of a unibody construction. In an alternate embodiment the four-sided frame 320 can be constructed of one or more segments coupled together (e.g., glued, welded or stitched).

The segment 320-1-a is pivotally coupled to a first latch component, made up of latch-arm 350-1, and the segment 320-1-b is pivotally coupled to a second latch component, made up of latch-arm 350-2 and latch-arm 350-3. The first latch component and the second latch component are pivotally coupled together to form the latch mechanism 350. When the latch mechanism 350 is in a closed position (e.g., as explained further with reference to FIG. 3b and FIG. 4c), the frame securely encloses a camera. When the latch mechanism is in an open position (e.g., as explained further with reference to FIG. 3a and FIG. 4a below), the segment 320-1-a and the segment 320-1-b are separable, allowing for the insertion or removal of a camera. In some conventional camera housing configurations, inserting a camera into or removing a camera from the frame requires the removal of the camera from the camera mount 390. Accordingly, the latch mechanism 350 allows the removal of the camera from the camera housing 320 without requiring the removal of the housing from the camera mount.

The four-sided frame 320 has a perimeter dimension that allows for the frame to fit the perimeter of the camera as further described with FIG. 3b. For example, in some embodiments, top side has a length of approximately 2 to 7 centimeters, and a width of approximately 1 to 5 centimeters. In some embodiments, latch-arm 350-1 has a length of approximately 3 to 4 centimeters, and a width of approximately 0.25 to 1 centimeters, and the latch-arms 350-2 and 350-3 have lengths of approximately 2 to 3 centimeters, and widths of approximately 0.25 to 1 centimeters.

As shown in FIG. 3a, the latch-arm 350-1 includes a frame-coupled arm-end pivotally (e.g., rotatably) coupled to the segment 320-1-a by a hinge mechanism 370-1. The latch-arm 350-2 and the latch-arm 350-3 each include corresponding frame-coupled arm-ends and pivotally couple to the segment 320-1-b by hinge mechanisms 370-2 and 370-3, respectively. It should be noted that although the latch-arms 350-2 and 350-3 form a single latch component in the embodiment of FIG. 3a, in other embodiments, the latch-arms are separate/non-coupled components. The latch-arm 350-1 is pivotally coupled to the latch-arms 350-2 and 350-3 by hinge mechanism 370-4. The hinge mechanism 370-4 allows the latch-arm 350-1 to pivotally rotate relative to the latch-arms 350-2 and 350-3.

The housing 320 includes a plurality of protrusions (protrusions 385-1 and 385-2) protruding from the bottom side 320-2 of the housing. The protrusions are configured to interlock with mating protrusions of the camera mount 390. It should be noted that although shown on the bottom side 320-2 of the housing, in alternative embodiments, the plurality of protrusions protrude from the left side, the right side, or the top of the camera housing. Likewise, although the latch mechanism is shown on the top side 320-1 of the camera housing, in alternative embodiments, the latch mechanism is located on a different side of the camera housing, such as the left side or the right side.

The camera housing 300 can be made of a mechanically compliant or pliable material (e.g., such as plastic, resin, or a polycarbonate material), allowing the frame to adequately flex and bend so as to enable insertion of a camera into and out of the frame. The latch components can be made of an electrically non-conductive material (e.g., such as plastic, or resin), to prevent or minimize electrical interference with an antenna located on the camera. In some embodiments,

camera housing **300** has a height of approximately 4 to 6 centimeters, a width of approximately 5 to 7 centimeters, and a depth of approximately 1 to 4 centimeters). The camera housing **300** can be made of an optically transparent, substantially transparent, translucent, or opaque material. In some embodiments, camera housing **300** is made of a water-proof or water-resistant material.

FIG. **3b** illustrates a perspective view of a camera housing **300** with a securing latch mechanism **350**, according to some embodiments. In the closed position, the camera is substantially enclosed by the frame **320** and the inner perimeter of the frame **320** (perimeter **P1**) is substantially equal to the outer lateral perimeter of the camera. As a result, when the latch mechanism is in the closed position, the camera is securely enclosed inside the camera housing.

As illustrated in FIG. **3b**, in the closed position, the latch mechanism **350** is substantially flush with the side **320-1** at location **396** and the side **320-4** at location **397**. As a result, in the closed position, the latch is flush with the rest of the frame thereby improving the aesthetic look of the camera housing. Furthermore, the uniform and seamless surface of the frame with the latch in the closed position (e.g., due to the absence of exposed joints or crevices around the latch region) can help ensure that the frame does not physically catch on or entangle with surrounding objects (e.g., other sporting equipment, the user, or objects in the environment).

In some embodiments, rather than being flush with the side **320-1** at location **396** and the side **320-4** at location **397**, the latch mechanism **350** protrudes above a surface of side **320-1** at location **396** and above a surface of side **320-4** at location **397**. In such embodiments where the latch mechanism **350** is thicker than top side **320-1** of the camera housing **300**, the latch mechanism **350** may beneficially provide better reinforcement, strength, and stability and is thus more secure.

Furthermore, when the latch mechanism is in the closed position, the segment **320-1-a** and the segment **320-1-b** are separated by a first predefined separation distance, **D1**. When the latch mechanism is in the closed position, the effective perimeter of the frame **320**, **P1**, is substantially equal to a lateral perimeter of the camera. In some embodiments, when the latch mechanism **350** is in the closed position, the segments **320-1-a** and **320-1-b** are substantially in contact, reducing the effective distance **D1** to essentially zero.

Returning to FIG. **3a**, the segment **320-1-b** includes a segment boundary surrounding a gap **380** configured to receive the latch mechanism **350** in the closed position (e.g., as shown in FIG. **3b**) such that, in the closed position, the latch mechanism **350** occupies the gap **380** and is surrounded by the segment boundary. In some embodiments, lengthwise portions of the segment boundary formed along the length of the segment **320-1-b** are rigidly connected by a widthwise supporting member (member **395** of FIG. **3b**), thereby securing a fixed separation between the lengthwise portions of the segment boundary. This makes it possible for the latch mechanism **350** to open without pushing the segment boundaries laterally outward, thereby constraining the top side of the frame in its original shape in a lateral direction.

FIG. **4a** illustrates another perspective view of camera housing **300** with latch mechanism **350**, according to some embodiments. In the open position, the latch mechanism **350** is lifted outward from the frame **320**, thereby allowing the segment **320-1-a** and the segment **320-1-b** to separate from each other. With segments **320-1-a** and **320-1-b** separated, the inner perimeter of the frame **320** is enlarged to an

effective perimeter, **P2**, larger than the outer lateral perimeter of the camera, thereby allowing insertion or removal of the camera into or out of the frame. The space **D2** between segments **320-1-a** and **320-1-b** increases or decreases when the latch mechanism is in the open position as the latch arm **350-1** pivotally rotates relative to the latch-arms **350-2** and **350-3**.

In some embodiments, camera housing **300** further includes one or more respective openings (e.g., openings or apertures **420-1** and **420-1**) to accommodate one or more of: a camera power button, a data port, a microphone interface, and the like. These openings on the frame align with corresponding camera features when the camera is securely enclosed within the housing, allowing for convenient access to camera functionality without having to remove the camera from the housing.

FIG. **4b** illustrates a close-up perspective view of latch mechanism **350** in an open position, according to some embodiments. As shown in FIG. **4b**, the latch components **350-1**, **350-2**, and **350-3** each form an angular separation relative to the top side of the frame **320**. In some embodiments, latch-arm **350-1** forms an angular separation **A1** with respect to the top side of the frame **320**, latch-arm **350-2** forms an angular separation **A2** with respect to the top side of the frame **320**, and latch-arm **350-1** forms an angular separation **A3** with respect to latch-arm **350-2**. As the latch mechanism **350** is moved from the closed position to the open position, the angles **A2** and **A3** increase, and **A1** decreases. Likewise, as the segments **320-1-a** and **320-1-b** are separated, causing latch-arm **350-1** to pivot angularly away from latch-arms **350-2** and **350-3**, the angle **A3** increases.

FIG. **4c** illustrates a close-up perspective view of latch mechanism **350** in a closed position, according to some embodiments. As shown in FIG. **4c**, in the closed position, the segment **320-1-a** and the segment **320-1-b** are separated by the distance **D1**. As illustrated in FIGS. **4b-4c**, at least a portion of the segment **320-1-b** terminates in a slice **450** of compressible material (e.g., a piece of rubber) configured to seal a gap, if present, between the segments **320-1-a** and **320-1-b** when the latch mechanism is in the closed position.

As shown in FIGS. **4b-4c**, the latch components **350-1**, **350-2** and **350-3** include a substantially right-angled bend configured to fold over a corner **460** adjacent to the second segment **320-1-b**. The right-angled bend allows the latch mechanism to be flush with the top side of the housing, the adjacent side of the housing, and the corner of the housing where the top side and the adjacent side intersect.

FIGS. **5a-5c** illustrate perspective views of a camera housing **300** with a foldable handle mechanism **520** configured to serve as a securing arm, according to some embodiments. In some embodiments, foldable handle **520** serves as a securing retainer configured to accommodate and secure extension modules coupled to a camera body. The foldable handle **520** includes a first arm **530-1** and a second perpendicular arm **530-2**, pivotally coupled to a side of the camera housing. FIG. **5b** illustrates the handle **520** in a first position configured to secure a camera and coupled extension module. The camera housing can include a reciprocal indentation **540** configured to accommodate the handle when folded downward into a second position (as illustrated in FIG. **5c**). The reciprocal indentation allows the handle to be flush with the inside walls of the camera housing when in the second position.

Additional Configuration Considerations

Throughout this specification, some embodiments have used the expression “coupled” along with its derivatives.

The term “coupled” as used herein is not necessarily limited to two or more elements being in direct physical or electrical contact. Rather, the term “coupled” may also encompass two or more elements are not in direct contact with each other, but yet still co-operate or interact with each other, or are structured to provide a thermal conduction path between the elements.

Likewise, as used herein, the terms “comprises,” “comprising,” “includes,” “including,” “has,” “having” or any other variation thereof, are intended to cover a non-exclusive inclusion. For example, a process, method, article, or apparatus that comprises a list of elements is not necessarily limited to only those elements but may include other elements not expressly listed or inherent to such process, method, article, or apparatus.

In addition, use of the “a” or “an” are employed to describe elements and components of the embodiments herein. This is done merely for convenience and to give a general sense of the invention. This description should be read to include one or at least one and the singular also includes the plural unless it is obvious that it is meant otherwise.

Finally, as used herein any reference to “one embodiment” or “an embodiment” means that a particular element, feature, structure, or characteristic described in connection with the embodiment is included in at least one embodiment. The appearances of the phrase “in one embodiment” in various places in the specification are not necessarily all referring to the same embodiment.

Upon reading this disclosure, those of skill in the art will appreciate still additional alternative structural and functional designs for a camera housing as disclosed from the principles herein. Thus, while particular embodiments and applications have been illustrated and described, it is to be understood that the disclosed embodiments are not limited to the precise construction and components disclosed herein. Various modifications, changes and variations, which will be apparent to those skilled in the art, may be made in the arrangement, operation and details of the method and apparatus disclosed herein without departing from the spirit and scope defined in the appended claims.

What is claimed is:

1. A camera housing, comprising:

a first housing portion that forms a first portion of a cavity to receive a camera;

a second housing portion that forms a second portion of the cavity to receive the camera;

a hinge movably connecting the first housing portion to the second housing portion so that the second housing portion is movable relative to the first housing portion to expose the cavity;

a securing arm that serves as a securing retainer configured to accommodate extension modules;

fastening structures configured to connect the first housing portion to the second housing portion when the camera housing is in a closed position, wherein one of the fastening structures comprises:

a first latch component connected to the first housing portion; and

a second latch component configured to connect to the second housing portion at a first end and the first latch component at a second end,

wherein the first latch component is configured to position the second latch component over the second housing portion so that the second latch component couples the first housing portion and the second housing portion together; and

protrusions extending from the first housing portion and configured to connect the camera housing to a mount.

2. The camera housing of claim **1**, wherein the hinge comprises a rod-shaped member extending through an inner hinge structure.

3. The camera housing of claim **1**, further comprising: pliable material that extends over buttons of the camera to allow a user to manipulate the buttons through the camera housing.

4. The camera housing of claim **3**, wherein the first latch component comprises a hook-shaped lateral bar.

5. The camera housing of claim **4**, wherein the second latch component comprises an L-shaped bar.

6. The camera housing of claim **1**, further comprising: a lens window that is substantially aligned with a lens of the camera when the camera is installed within the camera housing, wherein the camera housing is a waterproof enclosure that protects the camera from water.

7. The camera housing of claim **1**, further comprising: another fastening structure configured to hold the second housing portion in the closed position.

8. The camera housing of claim **1**, wherein another of the fastening structures is a clip assembly or a button assembly.

9. The camera housing of claim **1**, wherein the securing arm includes a first arm having a first side and a second side, wherein the first side and the second side extend parallel to one another with a space located between the first side and the second side.

10. A camera housing, comprising:

a first housing portion that forms a first portion of a cavity to receive a camera;

a second housing portion that forms a second portion of the cavity to receive the camera;

a hinge movably connecting the first housing portion to the second housing portion so that the second housing portion is movable relative to the first housing portion to expose the cavity;

a first fastening structure and a second fastening structure that connect the first housing portion to the second housing portion when the camera housing is in a closed position, wherein the first fastening structure extends over the second fastening structure to move the first housing portion and the second housing portion of the camera housing together into the closed position;

a third fastening structure configured to hold the second housing portion in the closed position; and

a securing arm that serves as a securing retainer configured to accommodate extension modules.

11. The camera housing of claim **10**, further comprising: an indicator window formed from a same material as forms a remainder of the camera housing, wherein the indicator window is formed from a transparent or translucent material.

12. The camera housing of claim **10**, further comprising: pliable material covering an exposed area in the camera housing, the pliable material configured to allow a user to manipulate buttons on the camera through the pliable material.

13. The camera housing of claim **10**, wherein the camera housing is free of a front face or a back face so that a front face or a back face of the camera is exposed when located within the cavity of the camera housing.

14. The camera housing of claim **10**, wherein the hinge includes an inner hinge structure on the first housing portion and an outer hinge structure on the second housing portion

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with a rod-shaped member extending therebetween to connect the first housing portion to the second housing portion.

15 **15.** The camera housing of claim **10**, further comprising apertures within the camera housing configured to accommodate one or more of a camera power button, a data port, or a microphone interface so that one or more of the camera power button, the data port, or the microphone interface are accessible without removing the camera from the housing and while the camera is securely enclosed within the housing.

16. A camera housing, comprising:

a first housing portion that forms a first portion of a cavity to receive a camera;

a second housing portion that forms a second portion of the cavity to receive the camera;

a hinge movably connecting the first housing portion to the second housing portion so that the second housing portion is movable relative to the first housing portion to expose the cavity, the hinge comprising:

an inner hinge structure disposed on the first housing portion;

an outer hinge structure disposed on the second housing portion; and

a rod-shaped member extending along the inner hinge structure and the outer hinge structure to movably connect the first housing portion to the second housing portion;

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fastening structures that connect the first housing portion to the second housing portion when the camera housing is in a closed position, wherein the fastening structures include a fastening structure configured to assist in securing the second housing portion in a closed position; and

a securing arm that serves as a securing retainer configured to accommodate extension modules.

10 **17.** The camera housing of claim **16**, comprising a watertight seal between the first housing portion and the second housing portion to maintain the cavity of the camera housing as waterproof.

15 **18.** The camera housing of claim **17**, further comprising a lens window comprising screws that removably connect a forward surface of the lens window to a forward surface of the camera housing.

20 **19.** The camera housing of claim **17**, wherein the camera housing is formed from a waterproof or water-resistant material.

20. The camera housing of claim **16**, wherein the fastening structure is configured to assist in securing the second housing portion is a button assembly located within a periphery of the other fastening structures.

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